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The POULTRY and EGG SITUATION

PES-176

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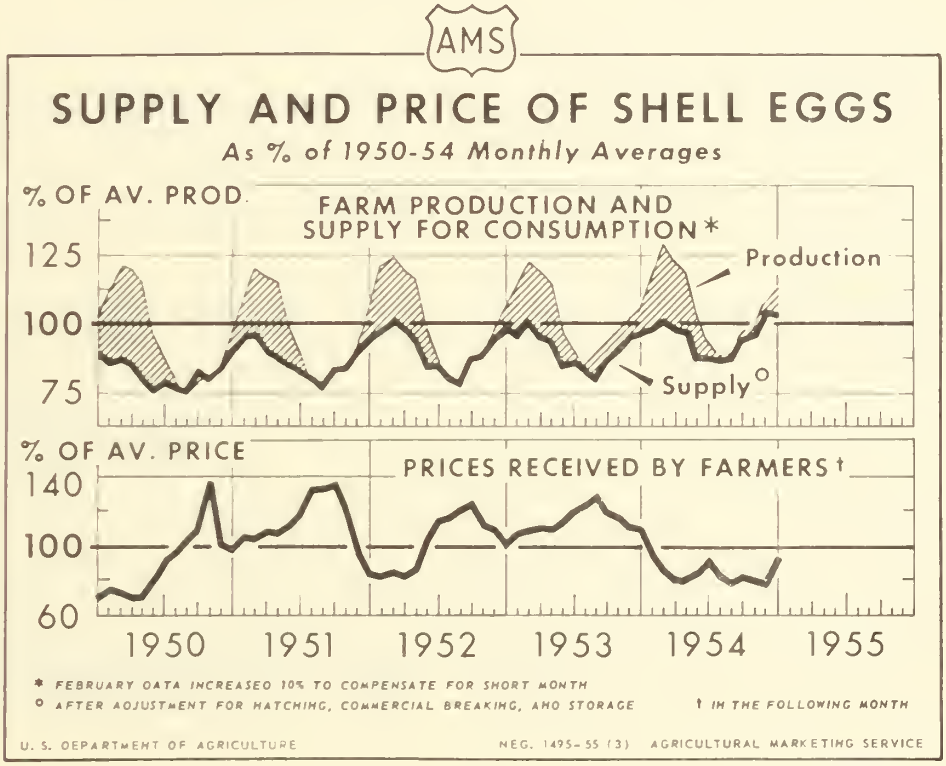


SUPPLY AND PRICE OF SHELL EGGS

As % of 1950-54 Monthly Averages

* FEBRUARY DATA INCREASED 10% TO COMPENSATE FOR SHORT MONTH
° AFTER ADJUSTMENT FOR HATCHING, COMMERCIAL BREAKING, AND STORAGE
† IN THE FOLLOWING MONTH

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NEG. 1495-55 (3) AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

Movement of fresh eggs to storage, to commercial egg breaking plants, and to hatcheries, is greatest during the flush production months of the spring. The remaining springtime supply of eggs for consumption as shell eggs considerably exceeds the supply in other months.

The usual seasonal changes in egg prices received by farmers at midmonth are related to these changes in seasonal supply, as shown in the chart above.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

THE POULTRY AND EGG SITUATION AT A GLANCE

Item	Unit	Month or date	Average 1944-53 1/	1954 2/	1955 3/	Month or date	Average 1944-53	1954	1955	Comments on current situation
					EGGS					
Farm production	Mil. doz.	Jan.	400.3	456.6	480.9	Feb.	427.9	458.4		On basis of daily rate of production, February considerably exceeds January
Average number of layers on farms	Millions	Jan.	394.7	382.6	390.1	Feb.	386.4	372.4		
Rate of lay per layer	Eggs	Jan.	12.3	14.3	14.8	Feb.	13.3	14.8		
Apparent disappearance of shell eggs per civilian 4/	Eggs	Dec.	29.5	33.4	34.8	Jan.	31.7	33.3	5/34.8	
Frozen egg production	Mil. lb.	Dec.	3.0	11.1	9.8	Jan.	13.1	21.9	20.2	
Dried egg production	Mil. lb.	Dec.	4.7	1.2	1.3	Jan.	5.9	1.7	1.9	
Price received by farmers	Ct. per doz.	Jan.	41.4	46.3	32.2	Feb.	37.3	45.7	39.5	Sharp spurt in January-February
Price received by farmers as a percentage of parity	Percent	Jan.	90	104	74	Feb.	91	112	99	
Retail price (AMS)	Ct. per doz.	Dec.	67.0	66.5	51.5	Jan.	59.2	65.1	50.1	
Egg-feed price ratio	Lb. feed	Jan.	11.6	12.1	8.5	Feb.	10.6	11.8	10.4	
Stocks:										
Shell	Thous. cases	Jan. 1	276	89	193	Feb. 1	285	75	235	
Frozen	Mil. lb.	Jan. 1	96.2	42.0	74.9	Feb. 1	74.1	38.2	65.9	
Chicks hatched by commercial hatcheries	Millions	Dec.	53.4	116.2	87.1	Jan.	77.6	140.1	111.1	Declines from year-earlier reflect small early-season interest in flock replacements
Pullets not yet of laying age on farms	Millions	Jan. 1	38.9	26.3	24.9	Feb. 1	24.5	18.5	16.8	
Farm price of poultry ration	Dol. per cwt.	Jan.	3.65	3.82	3.80	Feb.	3.58	3.86	3.80	
					POULTRY					
Price received by farmers for chickens, live										
Broilers	Ct. per lb.	Jan.	28.7	24.6	24.3	Feb.	28.2	22.6	25.2	Broiler prices into April will be based on marketings smaller than year-earlier
Farm chickens	Ct. per lb.	Jan.	25.3	21.6	15.6	Feb.	25.6	21.7	18.8	
All chickens	Ct. per lb.	Jan.	27.1	23.8	22.2	Feb.	27.2	22.4	23.7	
Price received by farmers for all chickens as a percentage of parity	Percent	Jan.	100	80	76	Feb.	100	75	81	
Retail price of broilers and fryers dressed (AMS) 6/	Ct. per lb.	Dec.	50.5	51.0	45.7	Jan.	50.1	50.1	48.0	
Price received by farmers for turkeys, live	Ct. per lb.	Jan.	35.5	33.2	26.4	Feb.	34.4	33.2	28.1	
Stocks:										
Poultry, excluding turkeys	Mil. lb.	Jan. 1	183.2	153.7	148.9	Feb. 1	167.2	141.7	126.8	
Turkeys	Mil. lb.	Jan. 1	96.9	122.1	121.0	Feb. 1	104.8	124.9	123.0	Below last year, despite larger crop
Broiler-feed price ratio 7/	Lb. feed	Jan.	---	4.7	4.7	Feb.	---	4.3	4.9	
Turkey-feed price ratio	Lb. feed	Jan.	10.0	8.7	6.9	Feb.	9.8	8.6	7.4	
Average weekly placement of chicks in 12 broiler areas	Millions	Jan.	---	14.2	13.0	Feb.	---	14.9	13.3	

1/ Except where data are for December in which cases the averages are for 1943-52. 2/ Except where data are for December in which cases the year is 1953. 3/ Except where data are for December in which cases the year is 1954. 4/ This series has been changed from that appearing in issues of the Situation, previous to 1955 and now represents only shell eggs. The complete series for 1938-54 appeared on page 24 of PES-175. 5/ Preliminary. 6/ The 10-year averages in this line are not precisely comparable to the averages for the individual months, because prior to April 1949 this item was reported as "chickens," and since then as "broilers and fryers." 7/ This differs from the chicken-feed price ratio formerly appearing in this table.

THE POULTRY AND EGG SITUATION

Approved by the Outlook and Situation Board, March 11, 1955

SUMMARY

After rising sharply during the last half of January and the first half of February, egg prices were generally steady through the first week of March. Prices farmers will receive for eggs in the next 6 months probably will average higher than the low prices of a year earlier (during January-March 1954, prices were dropping sharply and subsequently reached the lowest levels since 1950). Reasons for the price advance are not conclusive. Severe weather in the Midwest which reduced receipts in terminal markets, probably contributed. Egg production in January and February was rising seasonally and for the country as a whole was 5 percent above a year earlier in January, and was equal to last year in February.

Egg production during the next few months will be slightly above a year earlier. The number of layers on farms March 1 was slightly above the same date last year. The rate of lay per bird through February 1 was above last year, but on March 1 was 6 percent below March 1, 1954. It is likely to be about the same as last year in the months of April and May.

Farmers' February 1 intentions were to buy 18 percent fewer chicks for laying flock replacement than last year. The rise in egg prices in February may lead farmers to buy more chicks than they had planned. But hatchings for flock replacement early this season were substantially below 1954. On February 1, 14 percent fewer eggs were in incubators than a year earlier. All of the decline was in eggs for replacement stock. Broiler activity was above the year-ago level.

Broiler prices continued high enough into March to induce increases in placements. The mid-February price received by farmers was 25.2 cents per pound. The broiler-feed price ratio of 4.9 (pounds of broiler ration which could be bought by one pound of live broiler) compared with an average of 4.3 pounds for 1954. Chick placements and eggs set in incubators in specialized broiler producing areas in recent weeks have been slightly above a year ago. Last year's placements resulted in prices unsatisfactory to producers.

The outlook for 1955 turkey production is still subject to change from farmers' early intentions, which in January were to produce about the same number of heavy-type turkeys as last year and 11 percent fewer light-breed turkeys. Current data on numbers of turkeys tested for inclusion in breeding flocks, and hatchery activity, are fairly consistent with these intentions. But there is still time for farmers to change their plans.

REVIEW AND OUTLOOK

Sharp Contraseasonal Rise For February Egg Prices

U. S. average egg prices received by farmers in mid-February were 39.5 cents per dozen, 7.3 cents above mid-January but about 6 cents lower than in February 1954. From April 1954 to January 1955, farmers' prices ranged from 37.4 to 32.2 cents per dozen, 10 to almost 21 cents below corresponding prices of the previous year. The higher price level has continued into March. On March 9, for example, Iowa farmers were receiving 38-39 cents per dozen for grade A large eggs, contrasted with 24-25 cents per dozen 2 months earlier and 32-34 cents on March 12, 1954. Egg prices at other levels of trade also have increased.

The rise in egg prices began in the last half of January, when production was increasing seasonally (although weekly receipts of eggs in terminal markets declined and shell eggs were beginning to move into storage). The initial pressure toward higher prices began shortly after mid-January, at a time when weather was severe and when there was a spurt of activity in the futures market. On the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, the January 1955 egg future contract rose from about 28 cents per dozen at the beginning of the month to almost 32 cents per dozen by the last day of trading.

During parts of January and into February, storms and cold weather in the Midwest held back egg marketings. On both January 1 and February 1, however, egg output on farms was 5 percent above the same dates in 1954. But on March 1 production was 4 percent under a year earlier, partly on account of a 6 percent lower rate of lay per bird.

Rising demand also may have contributed to the January-February price increase. Consumers' incomes turned upward last fall and continued to rise into the first quarter of 1955.

Short-Run Price Prospects Depend On Balance Between Current Demand, Storage Demand, Flock Replacement

Part of the strength in egg prices is due to expectations of a smaller supply of eggs next fall. In each of the past 5 months fewer pullets than a year earlier were started for laying flock replacement and on February 1, 14 percent fewer eggs than a year ago were in the incubators of commercial hatcheries. Consequently, fewer new pullets will be added to laying flocks from now through about August than in the same period of 1954. If the hatch continues small in line with farmers' February 1 intentions to purchase 18 percent fewer chicks than last year, additions of pullets to laying flocks next fall may also be low.

With the present level of consumption and the prospective level of production, prices received by farmers in the next 6 months probably will be above a year earlier, though they may decline from the early-March level. The level of egg prices to early **may lead farmers to buy more** chicks than they had originally planned.

Table 1 .- Eggs: Prices, 1955 with comparisons

Item	1954				1955			
	Jan. 15	Feb. 15	Mar. 15	Apr. 15	Jan. 17	Feb. 15	Mar: latest available price	
							Date	Price
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents		Cents
U. S. average price received by farmers, per dozen	46.3	45.7	38.7	35.0	32.2	39.5		
Iowa, prices received by farmers, per dozen 1/:								
Grade A Large	40-41	36-37	33-34	28-29	25-26	36-39	9	38-39
Grade A Medium	34-36	34-35	31-32	25-26	20-22	33-34	9	35-36
Current receipts	37-38	35-36	30-32	25-26	24	33-34	9	34-37
New York, wholesale prices								
Midwestern, mixed colors, per dozen:								
Fancy heavy-weights	49-50	46-47	42-42½	38-39½	33½-34½	47-48½	9	46-48
Extras 1, medium	46-47	45½-46	40½-41	36-37	32-33	45½-46	9	44-45
Nearby whites, per dozen:								
Extra fancy, heavy weights	51½-53	47-48	44½-45½	49-51	35-36	49 50	9	48½-50
Medium	48-48½	45-46	41-41½	42-44	34-34½	47-47½	9	47-47½
Small (pullets)	44-45	---	---	33½-34	28½-29½	---		---
Frozen egg, per pound 2/								
Mixed whole egg	36½-37½	35½-37½	30½-33	25½-29	27-28½	31-33	4	33-34½
Yolk 3/	61-63	62-63	52-55	47-48	52-54	53-54	4	54-56
Albumen	23-27	21-23	21½-22½	18-20	15-17½	20-21	4	20½-22½
Chicago								
Wholesale price, per dozen:								
Mixed colors, extras, Large	46½-47	45½-46	39-39½	35-36½	32-33	44½-45	9	42½-43
Future contracts:								
September delivery (closing price)	45.70	47.05	44.45	41.35	39.30	46.70	10	45.65
San Francisco, wholesale price, per dozen:								
Grade A, Large	54½-55½	52½-53½	42½-43½	42½-43½	43½-44½	50½-51½	9	45½-46½
Grade A, Mediums	53-53½	51-51½	39-39½	40-40½	42-42½	50-50½	9	44-44½

1/ Friday of given week, "mostly." 2/ Carlots. Average for the week. 3/ Highest color quoted.

Table 2.- Eggs: Production, prices, and related factors, monthly, 1953 to date

Month	Layers on farms, first of month*			Farm egg production			Mid-month average price received by farms, per dozen			First-of-month storage stocks					
										Shell			Frozen (case equivalent) 1/		
	1953	1954	1955	1953	1954	1955	1953	1954	1955	1953	1954	1955	1953	1954	1955
	Mil.	Mil.	Mil.	Mil.	Mil.	Mil.	Ct.	Ct.	Ct.	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases
Jan.	379.5	387.3	397.0	5,416	5,479	5,771	45.8	46.3	32.2	153	89	193	1,303	1,092	1,946
Feb.	368.8	378.0	383.2	5,304	5,501	5,518	42.0	45.7	39.5	120	75	235	909	993	1,711
Mar.	356.8	366.8	375.0	6,272			44.7	38.7		248	135		1,102	1,082	
Apr.	342.6	352.3		6,068			45.5	35.0		375	443		1,694	2,388	
May	327.1	334.6		5,846			45.9	33.1		816	728		2,571	3,545	
June	309.6	320.5		5,032			45.7	33.0		1,431	1,348		3,436	4,337	
July	296.6	306.5		4,624			47.7	34.5		1,513	1,639		4,149	4,836	
Aug.	288.9	303.3		4,329			50.2	37.4		1,199	1,435		3,970	4,696	
Sept.	300.3	323.9		4,190			51.4	33.8		827	1,031		3,466	4,177	
Oct.	339.3	367.5		4,600			53.2	32.4		494	833		2,854	3,605	
Nov.	366.6	383.9		4,784			49.7	33.9		288	636		2,256	3,064	
Dec.	383.7	391.7		5,239			48.5	32.7		137	325		1,585	2,459	
Total or average				61,704			47.5	36.4							

1/ Converted on basis of 38.5 pounds per case.
* These data do not fully reflect revisions released March 11, 1955.

Table 3.- Eggs: Weekly receipts at selected markets, January 1955 to date with year-earlier comparisons

Week ending 1/	Boston		New York		Chicago		Phila-delphia		Los Angeles	
	1954	1955	1954	1955	1954	1955	1954	1955	1954	1955
	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases
Jan. 1	27.0	36.7	83.2	95.2	66.2	55.7	20.9	19.6	33.9	45.8
8	27.5	31.1	107.8	92.9	69.8	84.2	28.3	26.5	43.6	43.6
15	24.9	30.1	92.6	106.7	77.1	91.1	24.9	27.8	39.2	47.8
22	25.0	25.6	91.3	106.6	68.4	77.3	25.1	30.7	38.6	62.3
29	29.3	31.5	100.1	87.6	74.1	62.1	24.6	23.6	39.1	54.2
Feb. 5	27.4	30.7	100.3	106.1	69.8	61.7	26.9	25.5	34.8	49.1
12	21.6	24.7	95.1	88.1	67.8	61.5	27.1	23.6	42.4	37.1
19	25.8	29.4	103.8	75.7	68.4	58.7	26.8	23.3	32.7	40.7
26	28.4	27.9	97.5	91.7	53.3	63.4	22.8	23.4	34.7	38.6
Mar. 5	25.1	27.8	97.2	96.8	77.4	66.8	25.3	25.1	35.2	
12	31.9		114.5		85.9		27.6		38.5	
19	27.3		106.1		88.3		25.2		38.3	
26	28.2		114.9		82.5		29.3		44.1	
Apr. 2	27.4		107.5		95.0		26.2		44.4	
9 2/	30.9		120.3		97.3		25.8		39.1	
16 3/	29.1		105.8		89.8		30.8		42.2	

1/ Dates are for 1955; 1954, corresponding weeks.
2/ Week preceding Easter Sunday, 1955.
3/ Week preceding Easter Sunday, 1954.

March, April, Egg Production Likely to Exceed 1954

On March 1, 1955, 2 percent more layers were on farms than last year. Numbers are likely to continue slightly above a year earlier for the next few months, while rate of lay per bird in the spring is likely to be about at 1954 levels. Therefore, the monthly output of eggs during April and May is likely to be slightly above 1954.

January and early February egg production was considerably larger than the year before. On February 1, output was 5 percent above the 1954 date, the result of 1^+ percent more layers than last February 1, and almost a 4 percent increase in rate of lay per bird. During January, egg production was 5 percent larger than last year, also mostly due to higher rate of lay.

Table 4 .- Eggs, shell and frozen: Total cold-storage stocks in 35 principal cities, end of each week during the into-storage season, 1949 to date

Week ending 1/	Stocks of shell eggs							Stocks of frozen eggs													
								In pounds							In case equivalent						
	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Mil. lb.	Mil. lb.	Mil. lb.	Mil. lb.	Mil. lb.	Mil. lb.	Mil. lb.	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases	Thous. cases
Jan. 1:	116	2/56	2/16	2/66	115	50	146	75	30	25	35	29	23	43	2,002	799	647	915	754	585	1,104
8:	104	80	19	74	92	44	165	69	2/29	22	33	26	22	40	1,828	2/786	575	860	685	564	1,050
15:	101	119	23	89	82	37	189	64	31	20	32	24	21	39	1,698	823	515	831	633	548	1,006
22:	100	226	27	123	74	36	194	58	32	19	31	22	20	38	1,537	857	485	816	580	525	987
29:	93	336	47	175	2/71	32	186	50	34	18	31	21	20	37	1,339	917	479	807	539	507	959
Feb. 5:	104	447	93	296	88	30	178	46	37	19	2/31	2/20	20	36	1,231	976	491	2/798	2/525	517	941
12:	120	529	113	435	108	2/28	165	44	40	2/18	31	21	2/19	36	1,167	1,060	2/470	813	550	2/494	928
19:	122	574	109	561	130	55	152	41	43	19	33	22	20	36	1,104	1,146	492	815	583	514	934
26:	98	621	115	690	141	77	159	40	46	19	35	24	21	35	1,068	1,227	505	916	620	535	911
Mar. 5:	2/88	712	110	791	158	106	166	2/39	52	20	37	26	23	35	2/1,031	1,374	527	971	668	598	912
12:	112	796	121	914	171	150		40	57	23	40	28	27		1,058	1,532	586	1,044	728	710	
19:	183	873	135	1,019	176	203		42	63	25	44	32	32		1,112	1,675	661	1,142	823	839	
26:	246	975	175	1,107	201	255		45	70	30	48	34	38		1,188	1,861	773	1,245	878	991	
Apr. 2:	329	1,096	249	1,189	222	321		48	78	36	51	38	44		1,288	2,068	941	1,329	977	1,142	
9:	394	1,231	337	1,243	277	337		51	82	41	56	41	50		1,367	2,179	1,076	1,451	1,074	1,292	
16:	437	1,397	445	1,345	338	367		55	88	48	61	46	56		1,478	2,339	1,259	1,582	1,192	1,456	
23:	520	1,591	562	1,469	430	428		68	93	54	65	51	62		1,820	2,467	1,414	1,698	1,321	1,603	
30:	589	1,819	686	1,640	527	486		63	97	61	68	55	67		1,670	2,582	1,587	1,779	1,435	1,751	
May 7:	708	2,051	841	1,832	620	602		68	100	68	72	60	73		1,780	2,670	1,755	1,877	1,562	1,889	
14:	883	2,279	1,073	2,039	738	756		70	101	75	76	65	77		1,869	2,703	1,948	1,982	1,692	2,005	
21:	1,063	2,498	1,258	2,226	850	857		75	105	81	81	70	82		2,013	2,790	2,101	2,097	1,818	2,141	
28:	1,236	2,631	1,396	2,333	950	955		81	107	88	85	75	85		2,169	2,845	2,281	2,199	1,936	2,219	
June 4:	1,342	2,718	1,501	2,435	997	1,016		87	110	94	89	79	89		2,329	2,932	2,443	2,309	2,040	2,309	
11:	1,424	2,780	1,565	2,489	1,021	1,120		93	3/112	99	93	81	93		2,489	3/2,991	2,578	2,441	2,112	2,411	
18:	1,506	3/2,808	1,607	3/2,509	1,050	1,162		97	112	104	96	85	97		2,598	2,988	2,696	2,482	2,195	2,525	
25:	1,580	2,785	1,628	2,496	3/1,054	1,202		101	112	106	98	88	100		2,703	2,982	2,743	2,558	2,284	2,609	
July 2:	3/1,622	2,754	3/1,642	2,438	1,047	3/1,219		104	111	109	101	91	104		2,762	2,948	2,836	2,625	2,358	2,698	
9:	1,601	2,656	1,621	2,349	1,033	1,200		104	109	3/110	102	3/91	106		2,769	2,912	3/2,852	2,639	3/2,371	2,741	
16:	1,528	2,559	1,582	2,213	991	1,151		3/105	107	109	3/102	91	3/106		3/2,798	2,852	2,841	3/2,639	2,357	3/2,766	
23:	1,430	2,442	1,545	2,095	935	1,084		103	105	109	100	89	106		2,751	2,804	2,833	2,596	2,305	2,762	
30:	1,363	2,348	1,508	2,027	859	1,031		100	103	107	98	88	106		2,665	2,738	2,775	2,544	2,275	2,762	
Aug. 6:	1,289	2,270	1,457	1,930	802	979		98	101	106	97	86	104		2,604	2,687	2,744	2,513	2,221	2,710	
13:	1,223	2,184	1,356	1,843	718	916		95	99	104	95	84	102		2,534	2,637	2,700	2,465	2,170	2,660	

1/ Dates given are for 1955: entries for the other years are for the corresponding weeks.

2/ Season low of holdings.

3/ Season peak of holdings.

Table 5 .- Shell eggs: Farm production and effective supply, and average price received by farmers, monthly, 1950 to date

(including data for cover chart)

Year	Months													Total and average 3/
	Jan.	February 1/	February 2/	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	
	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.	Mil. doz.
	(a) Farm production													
1950	436.5	433.6	477.0	520.2	509.2	491.8	416.4	375.0	343.6	320.6	337.2	338.5	372.0	4,938.0
1951	422.5	431.1	474.2	513.4	503.4	490.2	421.8	378.8	342.8	328.2	351.6	359.2	395.7	4,981.8
1952	446.8	472.3	519.5	532.2	512.2	494.8	415.9	369.3	343.8	340.1	364.2	372.5	417.9	5,129.2
1953	452.8	444.0	488.4	524.9	508.3	490.9	424.3	392.0	368.3	355.9	389.5	403.4	439.1	5,237.8
1954	456.6	458.4	504.2	551.7	525.0	510.4	443.1	404.2	387.3	391.2	423.7	430.5	465.7	5,493.6
1955	480.9													
Average 1950-54	443.0	447.9	492.7	528.5	511.6	495.6	424.3	383.9	357.2	347.2	373.2	380.8	418.1	5,156.1
	(b) Eggs used for commercial breaking													
1950	35.2	58.7	64.6	93.2	90.0	100.8	74.5	46.8	26.1	17.3	7.9	4.9	2.0	563.2
1951	17.7	27.0	29.7	60.0	65.2	68.2	38.6	17.6	10.6	5.9	3.4	2.4	1.8	321.0
1952	18.2	37.5	41.2	48.8	49.6	55.4	38.1	17.1	9.4	8.6	5.4	4.7	5.1	301.6
1953	14.0	36.6	40.3	52.1	57.4	56.4	45.3	17.3	9.9	6.3	7.1	6.6	11.5	324.1
1954	23.4	37.2	40.9	72.4	66.2	56.5	43.9	19.3	9.6	7.6	8.9	6.7	6.7	362.1
1955	21.8													
Average 1950-54	21.7	39.4	43.3	65.3	65.7	67.5	48.1	23.6	13.1	9.1	6.5	5.1	5.4	374.4
	(c) Eggs used for hatching													
1950	17.1	32.1	35.3	39.9	30.1	14.7	10.8	9.1	8.8	9.0	8.5	8.2	11.5	203.0
1951	19.3	32.4	35.6	42.6	36.4	19.2	14.1	10.7	9.2	9.9	10.0	10.4	14.6	232.1
1952	22.7	34.9	38.4	39.3	29.2	15.7	11.4	9.3	9.5	10.3	10.5	11.3	14.9	222.5
1953	20.2	32.9	36.2	37.9	30.4	18.0	12.8	10.8	10.3	11.6	12.8	13.8	16.4	231.3
1954	22.8	36.7	40.4	40.2	29.3	16.9	14.2	11.8	11.7	10.2	10.2	11.0	13.0	231.7
1955	19.3													
Average 1950-54	20.4	33.8	37.2	40.0	31.1	16.9	12.7	10.3	9.9	10.2	10.4	10.9	14.1	224.1
	(d) Changes in storage stocks of shell eggs 4/													
1950	8.1	10.6	11.7	16.8	25.5	38.0	7.6	-15.1	-17.8	-30.3	-31.7	-13.2	- .8	- 1.2
1951	1.2	2.5	2.8	4.5	19.9	33.3	10.3	- 4.7	-19.6	-19.7	-12.9	- 8.9	- 2.7	3.5
1952	2.9	21.1	23.2	19.6	17.6	30.0	5.2	-18.9	-16.8	-13.8	-21.3	-18.2	- 7.2	2.3
1953	- 1.0	3.8	4.2	3.8	13.2	18.4	2.5	- 9.4	-11.2	-10.0	- 6.2	- 4.5	--1.4	- 1.6
1954	- .4	1.8	2.0	9.2	8.6	18.6	8.7	- 6.1	-12.1	- 5.9	- -5.9	- 9.3	- 4.0	3.4
1955	1.3													
Average 1950-54	2.2	8.0	8.8	10.8	17.0	27.7	6.9	-10.8	-15.5	-15.9	-15.6	-10.8	- 3.2	1.3
	(e) Net effective supply 5/													
1950	376.1	332.2	365.4	370.3	363.6	338.3	323.5	334.2	326.5	324.6	352.5	338.6	359.3	4,170.6
1951	384.3	369.2	406.1	406.3	381.9	369.5	358.8	355.2	342.6	332.1	351.1	355.3	382.0	4,432.2
1952	403.0	378.8	416.7	424.5	415.8	393.7	361.2	361.8	341.7	335.0	369.6	374.7	405.1	4,607.4
1953	419.6	370.7	407.7	431.1	407.3	398.1	363.7	373.3	359.3	348.0	375.8	387.5	412.6	4,680.8
1954	410.8	382.7	420.9	429.9	420.9	418.4	376.3	379.2	378.1	379.3	410.5	422.1	450.0	4,903.2
1955	438.5													
Average 1950-54	398.8	366.7	403.4	412.4	397.9	383.6	356.7	360.7	349.6	343.8	371.9	375.6	401.8	4,558.9
	(f) Average price received by farmers for eggs, mid-month, per dozen													
	Cents	Cents		Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
1950	31.2	29.6		31.6	30.9	29.6	30.1	34.3	38.0	40.4	43.2	45.8	57.7	36.3
1951	42.6	41.4		43.7	43.2	45.2	44.7	46.6	49.6	55.0	55.6	56.5	51.1	47.8
1952	40.5	34.7		34.0	35.2	34.2	35.7	43.3	48.2	48.7	50.3	51.9	46.6	41.6
1953	45.8	42.0		44.7	45.5	45.9	45.7	47.7	50.2	51.4	53.2	49.7	48.5	47.6
1954	46.3	45.7		38.7	35.0	33.1	33.0	34.5	37.4	33.8	32.4	33.9	32.7	36.4
1955	32.2	39.5												
Average 1950-54	41.3	38.7		38.5	38.0	37.6	37.8	41.3	44.7	45.9	46.9	47.6	47.3	41.9

1/ As reported. 2/ Adjusted for length of month for better comparability with other months. 3/ Monthly totals and averages do not necessarily add to yearly figures due to rounding. The average price for 1954 is a simple average, other years are weighted by monthly sales. 4/ Plus sign indicates net into-storage movement; minus sign indicates net out-of-storage movement. 5/ Farm production minus eggs used for breaking and hatching, plus or minus storage movement.

By June or thereabouts, laying flock numbers are likely to reflect the reduction in the number of replacement chicks hatched in recent months, compared with a year ago. The April Crop Report will contain the estimate of the April 1 number of young chickens on farms for both 1955 and 1954, to indicate the extent of farmers' purchases to date of chicks for early-season laying flock replacement.

Any decline from last year in numbers of layers this summer is likely to be partly offset by continued increased rates of lay. In the past, the rate of lay per bird for July-September has increased an average of almost 2 percent each year. Rates of increase in the 4 months following September have been higher. This is shown more fully in the charts appearing in another section of this issue.

Table 6.- Layers on farms: First-of-month numbers, 1952 to date, and percentage relationships to January 1 and to preceding month 1/

Month	Hens and laying pullets on farms, first day of month				Numbers of hens and laying pullets as a percentage of Jan. 1 potential layers				Numbers of hens and laying pullets as a percentage of numbers first of preceding month			
	1952	1953	1954	1955	1952	1953	1954	1955	1952	1953	1954	1955
	Mil.	Mil.	Mil.	Mil.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
Jan.	388.0	379.5	387.3	397.0	92	94	94	94	102	100	101	101
Feb.	380.8	368.8	378.0	383.2	91	91	91	91	98	97	98	97
Mar.	369.7	356.8	366.8	375.0	88	88	89	89	97	97	97	98
Apr.	350.8	342.6	352.3		84	85	85		95	96	96	
May	332.7	327.1	334.6		79	81	81		95	95	95	
June	315.2	309.6	320.5		75	77	78		95	95	96	
July	297.2	296.6	306.5		71	73	74		94	96	96	
Aug.	287.5	288.9	303.3		68	72	73		97	97	99	
Sept.	301.4	300.3	323.9		72	74	78		105	104	107	
Oct.	339.7	339.3	367.5		81	84	89		113	113	113	
Nov.	363.7	366.6	383.9		87	91	93		107	108	104	
Dec.	378.2	383.7	391.7		90	95	95		104	105	102	

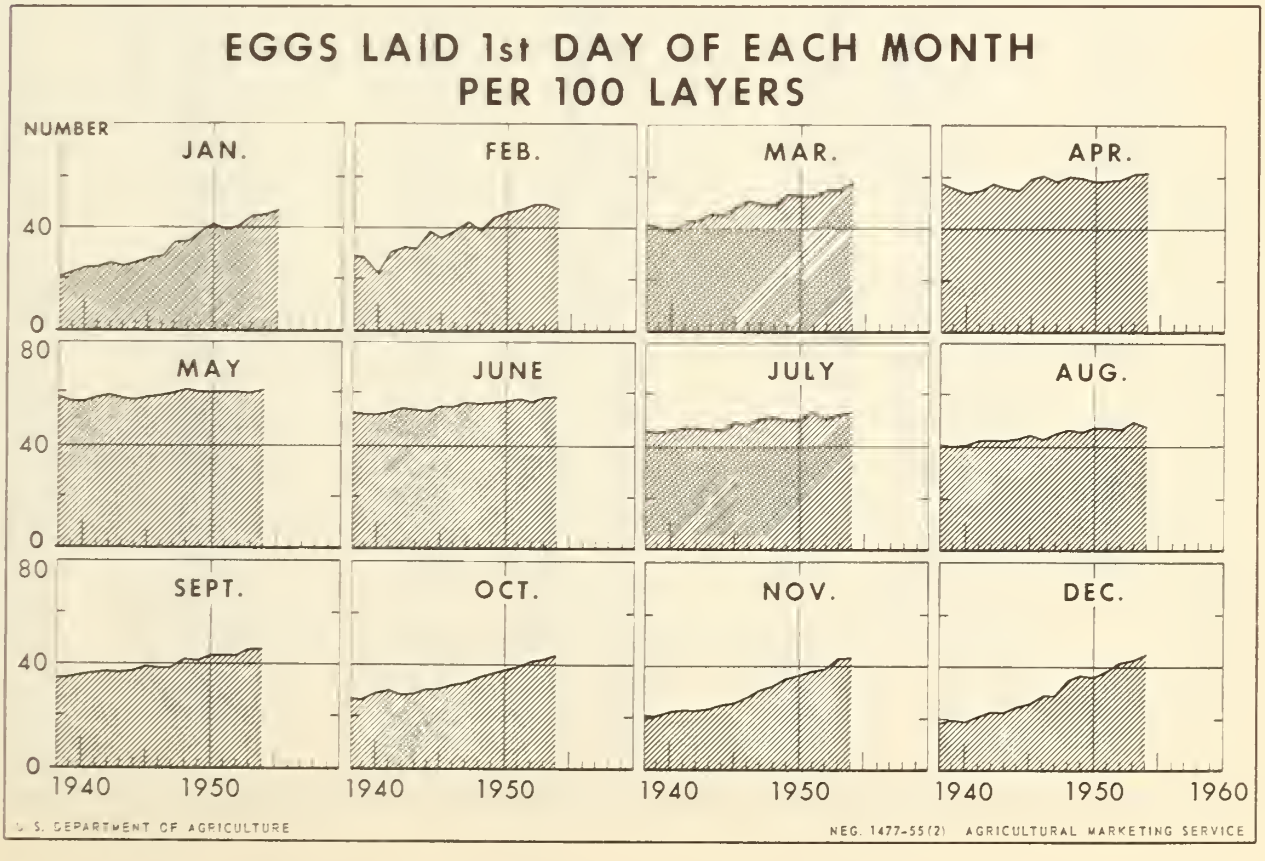
1/ These data do not fully reflect revisions, released March 11, 1955, of 1953 and subsequent data.

After September, the number of layers will be influenced by chicks hatched in April and thereafter. The number of chicks hatched will be affected by changes in prices received by farmers.

In 1954, March was the largest single month of chick output, rather than April as is usual. Because the 1954 hatch for laying flock replacement was thus earlier than average, there is a belief that some layers currently in flocks may end their laying season earlier than usual in 1955. However, many highly-bred strains of laying stock are now capable of 12 or 13 months of sustained egg production. Such birds will still be laying after the time at which yearling layers would normally be moved to make room for the current year's pullets.

Table 7.- Hens and pullets on farms, comparisons at selected dates, 1950 to date

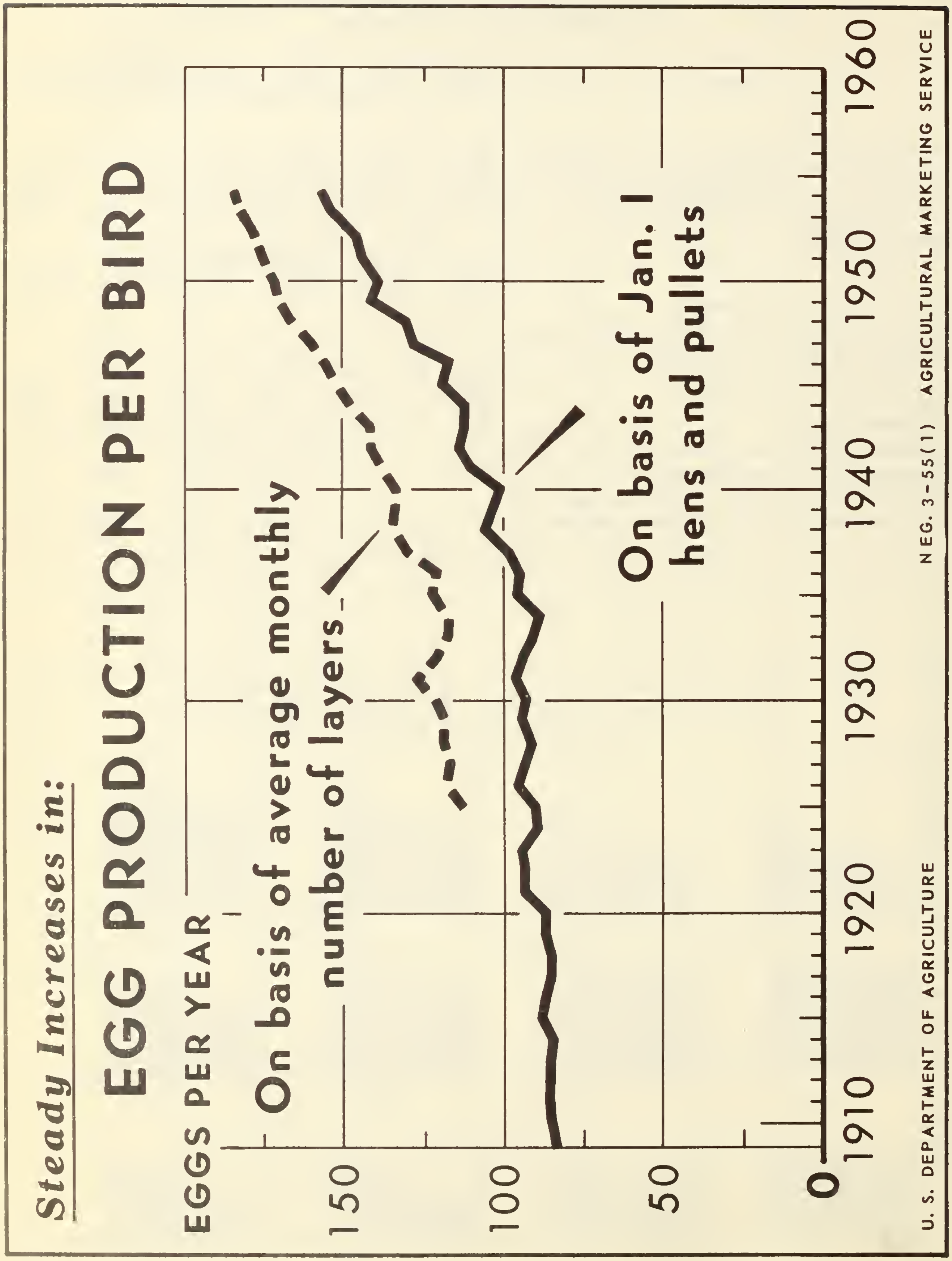
Item	Unit	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954
Pullets on farms						
(a) Oct. 1, laying and not laying	Mil.	301.3	320.7	293.0	312.3	325.5
(b) Jan. 1 following, laying	Mil.	233.7	244.3	230.0	255.1	260.3
(c) (b) as a percentage of (a)	Pct.	78	76	78	82	80
Hens on farms						
(a) October	Mil.	191.6	185.8	185.3	170.6	175.9
(b) Jan. 1 following	Mil.	146.3	143.7	149.5	132.1	131.0
(c) (b) as a percentage of (a)	Pct.	76	77	81	77	74
Hens on farms, given date, as a percentage of Jan. 1 pullets						
(a) Oct. 1	Pct.	67	70	67	67	62
(b) Jan. 1 following	Pct.	51	54	54	52	47
Chickens raised	Mil.	635.1	663.5	617.0	609.3	620.8
Percentage of sexed pullets in farmers' chick purchases	Pct.	32	33	37	42	43
Pullets on farms Jan. 1 following as a percentage of chickens raised	Pct.	42	42	41	46	47



EGGS LAID 1st DAY OF EACH MONTH PER 100 LAYERS

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NEG. 1477-55(2) AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE



Steady Increases in:

EGG PRODUCTION PER BIRD

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NEG. 3-55(1) AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

Table 8 .- Annual egg production per bird, alternative bases, and supporting data, 1909 to date

Year	Total egg production on farms during the year	Hens and pullets (laying and not yet laying) on farms Jan. 1	Average number of layers on farms for the year	Egg production per bird during the year		
				Per hen and pullet on farms Jan. 1	Based on average number of layers on farms during the year	Sum of 12 monthly figures on egg production per 100 layers reduced to a per layer basis
	Millions	Millions	Millions	Number	Number	Number
1909	25,300	305		83		
1910	27,000	319		85		
1911	29,400	342		86		
1912	28,300	329		86		
1913	28,100	327		86		
1914	27,900	328		85		
1915	29,900	340		88		
1916	28,800	331		87		
1917	27,700	322		86		
1918	28,000	326		86		
1919	30,500	351		87		
1920	29,700	341		87		
1921	30,800	332		93		
1922	33,000	354		93		
1923	35,000	372		94		
1924	34,592	390		89		
1925	34,969	391	311	90	112	114
1926	37,248	394	315	95	118	120
1927	38,627	415	330	93	117	118
1928	38,659	427	326	91	119	119
1929	37,921	404	318	94	119	121
1930	39,067	420	322	93	121	122
1931	38,532	402	303	96	127	129
1932	36,298	386	299	94	121	123
1933	35,514	391	300	91	118	120
1934	34,429	385	291	89	118	119
1935	33,609	350	276	96	122	124
1936	34,534	363	285	95	121	123
1937	37,564	380	288	99	130	131
1938	37,356	353	276	106	135	137
1939	38,843	376	290	103	134	136
1940	39,707	393	297	101	134	135
1941	41,894	381	301	110	139	142
1942	48,610	428	342	114	142	145
1943	54,547	489	383	112	142	144
1944	58,537	524	396	112	148	148
1945	56,221	474	369	119	152	153
1946	55,962	473	358	118	156	157
1947	55,384	431	345	128	160	161
1948	54,899	418	332	131	166	167
1949	56,154	399	331	141	170	171
1950	58,734	424	342	139	172	173
1951	59,265	410	339	144	175	176
1952	60,985	420	342	145	178	179
1953	62,323	404	341	154	183	184
1954 1/	65,375	414	355	158	184	185
1955 1/		422				

1/ Preliminary.

Table 9 .- Annual and first-of-month rates of lay, United States, 1925 to date

Year	Annual rates per layer		Rate per 100 layers, first-of-month											
	Per hen and pullet on farms Jan. 1	Per layer on hand during the year	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
1925	90	112	10.2	16.8	35.5	52.8	54.3	48.2	41.1	36.7	31.7	24.9	13.8	10.8
1926	95	118	14.8	20.2	37.9	51.5	56.1	50.4	42.8	38.3	33.4	25.2	15.1	10.7
1927	93	117	14.1	20.0	38.6	54.8	55.3	49.6	41.4	36.2	30.5	22.5	15.2	11.8
1928	91	119	13.3	21.2	33.7	52.4	53.8	49.5	41.8	36.1	31.9	25.0	16.4	12.2
1929	94	119	16.9	21.2	32.5	55.2	56.3	50.6	43.2	38.8	32.9	25.1	15.7	11.7
1930	93	121	14.7	19.2	42.0	53.8	55.0	49.0	42.3	35.7	31.1	24.2	15.4	13.5
1931	96	127	16.2	25.2	41.1	52.8	56.5	50.9	42.9	38.1	34.4	25.6	18.1	15.3
1932	94	121	18.2	25.8	39.3	50.7	55.7	49.5	42.6	36.9	33.2	24.8	16.2	12.0
1933	91	118	14.2	28.3	34.3	52.1	54.9	46.4	39.6	36.1	30.6	22.9	15.2	12.5
1934	89	118	17.1	24.6	34.7	51.0	55.0	48.1	40.8	33.8	30.0	23.9	16.6	14.4
1935	96	122	15.8	20.7	36.1	53.9	55.4	50.4	43.8	36.5	32.5	25.2	18.1	15.2
1936	95	121	17.8	22.4	32.0	54.5	56.6	51.2	44.0	36.2	31.3	24.5	17.2	15.0
1937	99	130	20.6	24.7	38.3	52.7	57.8	52.4	44.3	40.2	35.5	28.0	19.8	17.5
1938	106	135	21.1	29.6	41.0	57.6	58.1	52.8	46.0	40.8	34.7	27.4	20.9	18.3
1939	103	134	22.6	29.4	40.1	55.9	57.5	52.3	45.2	40.1	35.1	27.0	20.7	19.8
1940	101	134	24.2	22.8	39.4	53.3	57.0	52.9	45.7	40.6	36.0	29.1	22.3	19.0
1941	110	139	24.8	31.6	42.3	54.3	58.6	53.4	47.1	42.0	37.0	30.2	22.8	20.7
1942	114	142	26.6	32.8	42.9	57.2	59.4	54.4	47.3	42.2	37.5	29.4	22.8	22.6
1943	112	142	25.5	32.6	45.9	55.9	58.0	54.0	46.4	42.1	36.9	29.6	23.0	22.2
1944	112	148	26.5	38.4	45.7	55.2	57.4	53.8	46.3	42.8	37.4	31.4	25.3	24.6
1945	119	152	28.5	36.7	48.1	59.5	58.5	55.2	49.5	44.6	39.3	31.7	25.9	26.1
1946	118	156	29.4	38.6	50.3	60.0	59.5	55.2	48.3	42.5	38.4	32.6	28.1	29.3
1947	128	160	35.1	42.1	49.4	58.1	59.9	56.8	50.8	45.2	38.4	33.6	31.3	29.3
1948	131	166	35.4	39.5	49.2	59.9	60.9	56.7	51.5	46.9	41.9	35.9	32.5	34.3
1949	141	170	38.9	43.9	53.3	59.6	60.1	56.8	51.0	45.8	41.8	36.9	35.3	37.1
1950	139	172	41.4	46.0	52.8	58.2	60.0	57.2	51.2	47.4	43.0	38.0	36.9	36.3
1951	144	175	39.8	47.1	53.2	58.7	60.6	58.0	53.1	47.7	43.5	39.5	38.1	38.7
1952	145	178	40.9	49.1	55.1	59.3	60.6	57.6	51.0	46.7	43.7	41.2	39.1	41.3
1953	154	183	44.1	49.3	55.1	60.5	60.2	58.2	52.4	49.5	45.3	42.0	42.1	42.9
1954	158	184	44.8	47.5	58.0	60.6	61.2	58.5	53.1	47.8	45.7	43.1	42.6	44.3
1955			46.2	49.2	54.7									

Table 10.- Farmers' intentions to buy chicks for laying flock replacement, 1955 and related data

Geographic division	Chickens raised in 1954	Pullets on farms, Jan. 1, 1955	Intended purchases for 1955 as a percent of 1954	Distribution of chick purchases 1/			
				1954, actual		1955, intended	
				Sexed pullets	Straight run	Sexed pullets	Straight run
	Mil.	Mil.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
New England	34.5	12.8	87	71	24	66	31
Middle Atlantic	71.7	40.7	94	55	40	57	39
E. N. Central	123.0	59.5	78	52	42	53	41
W. N. Central	162.6	82.8	72	49	43	48	44
South Atlantic	64.0	26.3	89	27	70	25	73
E. S. Central	50.2	19.0	85	41	55	39	57
W. S. Central	54.5	20.7	84	18	78	16	81
Mountain	18.2	6.8	91	33	60	31	64
Pacific	42.1	22.3	90	58	39	61	36
United States	620.8	290.9	82	43	51	42	53

1/ Cockerel chicks are the remainder which, when added to "sexed pullets" and "straight run" will comprise 100 percent of farmers' purchases of chicks, excluding chicks for specialized commercial broiler enterprises. Although it is incongruous to include sexed cockerels with chicks for laying flock replacement, they are best reported here to complete the statistical picture.

The January 1 data regarding hens and pullets on farms indicate that the accelerated culling of layers noted in the last 3 months of 1954 was mostly among the hens in the flock, not among the pullets. Table 7 indicates that, compared with other recent years, fewer than average hens, but relatively more pullets, remain in flocks.

Fewer Early-Season Pullets for Laying Flock Replacement

From December 1954 through February, the hatching of egg-laying type chicks for flock replacement was far below a year earlier. This is consistent with farmers' intentions, as of about February 1, to purchase 82 percent as many replacement chicks this year as last. According to their intentions, farmers also plan to buy a smaller proportion of sexed pullets.

In past years, the rate of hatching replacement chicks has changed during the hatching season in response to economic conditions. If egg prices through the remainder of the spring hold near the level of early March, farmers may purchase more chicks than they planned in February.

Table 11. Chickens raised and related data, 1925 to date

Year	Chickens raised	Egg-feed price ratio (weighted average) 1/	As a percentage of previous year: Intentions to raise chickens 2/	Egg-feed price ratio 1/	Chickens raised	Young chickens on farms Oct. 1	Pullets laying and not yet laying on farms Jan. 1 following
	Mil.	Lb.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
1925	679	12.9		102	103		
1926	718	13.5		105	106		
1927	750	13.4		99	104		
1928	700	12.2		91	93		
1929	751	13.1		107	107		
1930	777	13.8		105	104		
1931	709	10.6		77	91		94
1932	736	11.6		109	104	107	103
1933	750	14.3		123	102	99	100
1934	644	10.9		76	86	86	89
1935	658	11.4		105	102	105	107
1936	715	13.1		115	109	113	110
1937	601	9.4		72	84	86	86
1938	651	11.4		121	108	113	113
1939	697	12.6		111	107	105	105
1940	634	10.4	90	83	91	98	94
1941	745	11.5	109	111	118	113	116
1942	844	13.2	112	115	113	108	115
1943	1,001	14.7	116	111	119	114	110
1944	832	11.2	83	76	83	82	86
1945	890	12.8	96	114	107	114	107
1946	738	11.9	86	93	83	81	87
1947	719	11.3	94	95	97	100	99
1948	615	9.8	80	87	86	90	93
1949	705	12.7	107	130	115	108	111
1950	635	9.6	88	76	90	95	92
1951	663	11.4	96	119	104	105	105
1952	617	9.1	90	80	93	90	92
1953	609	11.3	96	124	99	106	111
1954	3/621	10.9(12.3)	100	96	3/102	99	103
1955		4/ (9.4)	82				

1/Weights are as follows: Preceding November, 1; preceding December, 2; January, 3; February, 4; March, 5; April, 3; May, 1. 2/ Literally, intentions to purchase chicks for laying flock replacement. 3/ Preliminary. 4/ For 1955, November through February; comparable 1954 in parenthesis.

Table 12.- Chickens raised, and intentions to raise chickens, by regions, 1943 to date

Year	Chickens raised		Intentions to raise chickens as a percentage of previous year	Chickens raised		Intentions to raise chickens as a percentage of previous year	Chickens raised		Intentions to raise chickens as a percentage of previous year
	Number	Percentage of previous year		Number	Percentage of previous year		Number	Percentage of previous year	
	Mil.	Pct.	Pct.	Mil.	Pct.	Pct.	Mil.	Pct.	Pct.
	New England			Middle Atlantic			East North Central		
1943	34	121	132	94	131	123	184	118	110
1944	31	91	80	80	85	74	154	84	84
1945	31	100	94	90	112	110	171	111	92
1946	23	74	68	69	77	89	140	82	81
1947	26	113	93	68	99	103	136	97	92
1948	24	92	81	61	90	84	115	85	79
1949	29	121	111	74	121	114	135	117	99
1950	29	100	105	67	91	91	124	92	85
1951	31	107	140	76	113	100	126	102	92
1952	33	106	96	73	96	95	118	94	87
1953	35	105	99	75	103	100	119	101	90
1954 1/	34	99	100	72	96	103	123	104	94
1955			87			94			78
	West North Central			South Atlantic			East South Central		
1943	286	116	112	108	119	126	89	114	125
1944	239	84	87	93	86	88	73	82	88
1945	251	105	90	92	99	107	74	101	96
1946	215	86	84	80	87	95	69	93	99
1947	210	98	91	75	94	93	65	94	95
1948	160	76	71	69	92	94	61	94	89
1949	187	117	102	73	106	105	66	108	107
1950	168	90	83	66	90	92	57	86	98
1951	173	103	88	68	103	102	57	100	101
1952	152	88	86	67	99	103	55	96	99
1953	157	103	92	63	93	98	51	93	98
1954 1/	163	104	94	64	102	104	50	98	104
1955			72			89			85
	West South Central			Mountain			Pacific		
1943	120	119	115	33	122	119	53	118	121
1944	94	78	80	26	79	79	42	79	71
1945	99	105	96	28	108	90	50	119	106
1946	82	83	91	23	82	88	37	74	78
1947	79	96	96	22	96	96	37	100	92
1948	66	84	84	21	95	94	38	103	81
1949	77	117	117	22	105	110	42	111	117
1950	66	86	88	20	91	88	39	93	88
1951	66	100	97	22	110	100	45	115	102
1952	58	88	94	19	86	86	42	93	85
1953	52	90	99	18	95	106	40	96	100
1954 1/	55	105	107	18	101	105	42	104	108
1955			84			91			90

1/ Preliminary.

Table 13.- Chickens raised and subsequent numbers of young chickens on farms, available data, 1930 to date

Year	Chickens raised	Young chickens on farms, specified dates						
		October 1				January 1 following		
		Laying pullets 1/	Pullets not yet laying 1/	Other young chickens	Total 1/ 2/	Laying pullets	Pullets not yet laying	Total 2/
	Mil.	Mil.	Mil.	Mil.	Mil.	Mil.	Mil.	Mil.
1930	777	---	---	---	---	198	46	244
1931	709	84	156	122	362	185	44	230
1932	736	88	167	133	387	192	45	237
1933	750	87	167	130	384	196	42	238
1934	644	79	149	102	331	172	40	212
1935	658	88	154	104	346	186	40	226
1936	715	101	169	119	390	210	39	249
1937	601	89	159	85	334	173	42	215
1938	651	100	175	102	378	194	48	242
1939	697	101	186	111	398	202	51	254
1940	634	112	180	98	390	192	48	240
1941	745	123	205	113	441	221	57	278
1942	844	137	227	115	478	255	63	319
1943	1,001	124	269	151	544	282	67	350
1944	832	134	212	100	447	254	47	301
1945	890	128	243	137	508	269	53	322
1946	738	126	199	87	412	244	37	281
1947	719	131	195	86	412	243	35	278
1948	615	125	176	70	371	227	31	258
1949	705	140	185	75	399	255	32	287
1950	635	143	159	77	378	234	30	264
1951	663	149	172	76	397	244	32	276
1952	617	154	139	63	356	230	24	254
1953	609	169	144	63	375	255	26	281
1954	621	192	134	48	373			291

1/ These data do not fully reflect revisions released March 11, 1955.
2/ Computed from unrounded data.

Table 14.- Numbers of young chickens and pullets on farms in relation to numbers of chickens raised and to sex of purchased chicks, available data, 1930 to date

Year	Chickens raised	Young chickens on farms, October 1		Pullets (laying and not yet laying) on farms, January 1 following		Sexed pullets as a percentage of farmers' total purchases of replacement chicks
		Total	As a percentage of chickens raised	Total	As a percentage of chickens raised	
	Mil.	Mil.	Pct.	Mil.	Pct.	Pct.
1930	777	---	---	244	31.3	---
1931	709	362	51.1	230	32.4	---
1932	736	387	52.7	237	32.2	
1933	750	384	51.2	238	31.8	---
1934	644	331	51.4	212	32.9	---
1935	658	346	52.5	226	34.4	---
1936	715	390	54.5	249	34.9	---
1937	601	334	55.5	215	35.8	---
1938	651	378	58.1	242	37.2	---
1939	697	398	57.2	254	36.4	---
1940	634	390	61.6	240	37.9	---
1941	745	441	59.2	278	37.3	---
1942	844	478	56.6	319	37.7	20.9
1943	1,001	544	54.3	350	34.9	17.2
1944	832	447	53.7	301	36.2	20.3
1945	890	508	57.0	322	36.2	18.5
1946	738	412	55.8	281	38.1	22.3
1947	719	412	57.3	278	38.6	26.0
1948	615	371	60.3	258	42.0	30.0
1949	705	399	56.6	287	40.7	31.0
1950	635	378	59.5	264	41.5	32.0
1951	663	397	59.9	276	41.6	33.0
1952	617	356	57.8	254	41.2	37.0
1953 1/	609	375	61.6	281	46.2	42.0
1954 1/	621	373	60.1	291	46.9	43.0

1/ These data do not fully reflect revisions released March 11, 1955

In February 1954 farmers reported that they intended to buy about the same number of replacement chicks as a year earlier. The number actually raised was 2 percent greater. In that year, the number of chicks bought early in the season was well above a year earlier. But purchases dropped sharply after the middle of the season. In March the 1954 hatchery output of replacement chicks was 17 percent above a year earlier but by May it had fallen to 6 percent below May 1953.

In view of the developments so far, the replacement hatch this year is likely to be late rather than early as in 1954. Some of the data by which lateness or earliness of hatch can be judged are listed in table 15. Despite the expectation that hatchings later in the spring will be greater than in March, farmers' total purchases of replacement chicks this season, and the number of chickens raised for laying flock replacement, are likely to be lower than last year.

Broiler Hatchings Increasing; At 1954 Level in February

Broiler prices since the beginning of 1955 have been well above the 1954 average of about 23.0 cents per pound. In mid-January and mid-February, prices received by farmers were respectively 24.3 and 25.2 cents per pound. Smaller marketings than a year ago have been an important factor in the current increases above last year.

The reduction in broiler marketings in January and February resulted from reduced chick placements last fall. Broiler chick placements in 12 important producing areas in October 1954, were 8 percent lower than a year ago. In November 1954, the decline from the year before was 15 percent. In both months, the average rate of placements in 12 areas was 11 million chicks weekly.

Broiler chick placements continued below a year earlier through January, though the rate was 9 percent above October 1954. In late January, however, settings of eggs in incubators in broiler areas began to exceed the year earlier, and by mid-February weekly chick placements were larger than the year before by 4 percent.

Weekly broiler reports covering operations through March 5 indicated that broiler chick placements in the 4 weeks immediately preceding were above comparable 1954 output. They also indicated large placements in the 3 following weeks, because numbers of eggs set in incubators in the 3 most recent weeks covered by the reports were respectively 101, 97, and 97 percent of last year. Broilers usually are marketed 9 to 12 weeks after hatching or placement (one follows the other by one or two days).

Farmers' January Intentions to Raise Turkeys: Same Number of Heavy Breeds, Fewer Lightweights

Hatchings of turkey poults through mid-year will govern the output of heavy turkeys for slaughter during the last 3 months of 1955. The production of light-breed turkeys will be determined by hatchings continuing

Table 15.- Indications of changes in monthly distribution of replacement chicks during hatching season, 1952 to date

Year	Unit	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July
		(a) Hatchery output of chicks for farm flock replacement					
1952	Percent of previous year	112	104	92	74	62	
1953	do.	97	99	100	102	103	
1954	do.	117	117	109	94	76	
1955	do.						
		(b) Young chickens on farms for flock replacement, first of month					
1952	Millions			217.8	381.6	477.4	463.0
1953	do.			214.3	377.2	467.1	459.4
1954	do.			254.1	406.9	499.5	471.1
		(c) Young chickens on farms for flock replacement, first of month					
1952	Percent of previous year			108	94	91	91
1953	do.			98	99	98	99
1954	do.			119	108	107	103

Table 16.- Eggs set and chicks hatched for laying flock replacement, California, October 1954 to date, with comparisons

Period	Eggs set			Chicks hatched		
	(a) 1953-54	(b) 1954-55	(b) as a percent of (a)	(a) 1953-54	(b) 1954-55	(b) as a percent of (a)
	Thous.	Thous.	Pct.	Thous.	Thous.	Pct.
Oct.-Dec., inclusive	15,492	12,770	82	10,077	8,240	82
Jan. (4 weeks)	7,581	6,137	81	4,905	3,830	78
Feb. and Mar., weeks ending:						
Feb. 5	2,255	1,852	82	1,494	1,125	75
12	2,362	2,100	89	1,419	1,146	81
19	2,410	1,960	81	1,538	1,235	80
26	2,339	2,097	90	1,605	1,328	83
Mar. 5	2,337			1,713		
Total, Oct. to date	34,776			22,751		
Extension of 1954 data for later comparisons						
Mar. 12	2,315			1,742		
19	2,114			1,694		
26	2,234			1,691		
Apr. 2	1,890			1,690		

Table 17.- Broiler placements and settings of eggs in incubators (for broilers), 13 specialized areas, November 1953 to date 1/

Period	Average weekly rate	Percentage of year before	Percentage of corresponding item 3 months prior
	Millions	Percent	Percent
		(a) Placements	
1953			
November	13,632	115	119
December	14,073	114	126
1954			
January	14,336	110	117
February	14,876	111	108
March	15,739	108	111
April	15,964	108	111
May	15,388	107	103
June	15,063	109	95
July	14,742	121	92
August	13,882	121	90
September	13,113	117	87
October	11,514	95	78
November	12,052	88	86
December	11,246	80	86
1955			
January	12,394	86	108
Week ending:			
February 5	14,766	99	126
12	15,371	104	131
19	15,451	104	122
26	15,618	105	124
March 5	15,460	102	
		(b) Settings of eggs in incubators 2/	
February 19	21,613	101	135
26	21,227	97	130
March 5	21,785	97	173

1/ Excludes Arkansas.
2/ Indicative of placements 3 weeks later.

Table 18.- Weekly broiler placements in specialized areas; broiler prices and broiler-feed price ratios, Salisbury, Maryland, 1953 and 1954

Week ending 1/	1953				1954						
	Placements, 13 areas		Broiler price, per pound, Salisbury	Broiler-feed price ratio, Salisbury	Placements					Broiler price, per pound, Salisbury 4/	Broiler-feed price ratio, Salisbury 4/
					13 areas 2/		14 areas 3/		22 states		
	Weekly	Cumulative			Weekly	Cumulative	Weekly	Cumulative			
	Thous.	Thous.	Ct.	Lb. feed	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Ct.	Lb. feed
Jan. 2	13,047	13,047	30.1	5.6	15,075	15,075	18,243	18,243		22.5	4.4
9	13,251	26,298	28.2	5.3	14,913	29,988	18,008	36,251		22.2	4.4
16	12,929	39,227	28.0	5.3	14,172	44,160	17,031	53,282		24.3	4.8
23	12,870	52,097	27.3	5.1	13,807	57,967	16,550	69,832		23.0	4.5
30	13,184	65,281	27.8	5.2	14,451	72,418	17,504	87,336		22.3	4.3
Feb. 6	12,863	78,144	27.4	5.2	14,911	87,329	17,840	105,176		20.9	4.0
13	13,180	91,324	28.2	5.4	14,804	102,133	17,809	122,985		20.4	3.9
20	13,622	104,946	28.3	5.4	14,896	117,029	18,036	141,021		21.1	4.1
27	14,103	119,049	27.3	5.2	14,891	131,920	18,043	159,064		20.4	4.0
Mar. 6	13,962	133,011	27.3	5.2	15,143	147,063	18,363	177,427		21.9	4.2
13	14,624	147,635	27.1	5.2	15,531	162,594	18,905	196,332		21.9	4.2
20	14,905	162,540	26.8	5.1	15,679	178,273	18,945	215,277		22.4	4.3
27	14,431	176,971	27.2	5.2	16,267	194,540	19,676	234,953		24.1	4.6
Apr. 3	14,873	191,844	27.0	5.1	16,074	210,614	19,529	254,482		24.4	4.7
10	14,506	206,350	26.2	5.0	16,062	226,676	19,468	273,950		25.1	4.8
17	15,005	221,355	26.7	5.2	16,404	243,080	19,984	293,934		23.9	4.6
24	14,831	236,186	26.1	5.0	15,984	259,064	19,329	313,263		23.0	4.3
May 1	14,918	251,104	25.8	5.0	15,408	274,472	18,658	331,921		21.6	4.0
8	14,729	265,833	26.0	5.0	15,854	290,326	19,269	351,190		21.8	4.1
15	14,484	280,317	25.6	4.9	16,138	306,464	19,818	371,008		22.1	4.1
22	14,196	294,513	25.4	4.9	15,206	321,670	18,662	389,670		24.5	4.6
29	14,371	308,884	25.7	4.9	14,355	336,025	17,719	407,389		25.0	4.8
June 5	14,278	323,162	25.2	4.9	14,396	350,421	17,720	425,109		24.7	4.7
12	14,323	337,485	24.1	4.7	14,690	365,111	18,021	443,130		25.4	4.8
19	14,148	351,633	24.8	4.9	15,341	380,452	18,772	461,902		25.2	4.8
26	13,309	364,942	24.8	4.9	15,447	395,899	18,907	480,809		25.1	4.7
July 3	13,206	378,148	26.2	5.1	15,441	411,340	18,991	499,800		24.3	4.6
10	12,860	391,008	28.3	5.5	15,136	426,476	18,400	518,200		25.3	4.8
17	12,571	403,579	30.1	5.9	15,018	441,494	18,296	536,496		25.5	4.9
24	11,980	415,559	28.7	5.6	14,328	455,822	17,504	554,000		24.9	4.7
31	11,507	427,066	28.7	5.6	14,487	470,309	17,674	571,674		25.2	4.8
Aug. 7	11,188	438,254	28.6	5.6	13,915	484,224	16,930	588,604		25.0	4.8
14	11,802	450,056	28.4	5.5	13,834	498,058	16,688	605,292		24.8	4.7
21	11,678	461,734	28.5	5.6	13,998	512,056	17,033	622,325		25.3	4.8
28	11,061	472,795	28.3	5.5	13,782	525,838	16,816	639,141		25.0	4.7
Sept. 4	10,705	483,500	27.2	5.3	13,302	539,140	16,334	655,475		24.3	4.6
11	11,078	494,578	27.6	5.3	13,488	552,628	16,392	671,867		24.1	4.6
18	11,449	506,027	28.0	5.5	13,006	565,634	15,918	687,785		23.0	4.[illegible]
25	11,570	517,597	27.5	5.4	12,952	578,586	15,961	703,746		20.1	4.3
Oct. 2	11,125	528,722	26.6	5.4	12,819	591,405	15,855	719,601		19.2	3.9
9	11,295	540,017	25.7	5.2	11,586	602,991	14,300	733,901	14,314	18.0	3.6
16	11,779	551,796	25.2	5.1	11,387	614,378	14,014	747,915	14,176	20.8	4.2
23	12,495	564,291	25.0	5.1	11,426	625,804	14,127	762,042	14,062	20.5	4.[illegible]
30	12,836	577,127	24.0	4.9	11,659	637,463	14,271	776,313	14,453	22.6	4.[illegible]
Nov. 6	13,286	590,413	24.3	5.0	11,674	649,137	14,311	790,624	14,603	21.8	[illegible]
13	13,514	603,927	25.1	5.2	11,722	660,859	14,372	804,996	14,931	20.1	4.0
20	13,764	617,691	25.0	5.1	12,618	673,477	15,308	820,304	15,771	18.6	3.7
27	13,964	631,655	24.3	5.0	12,193	685,670	14,953	835,257	15,434	18.3	3.7
Dec. 4	14,258	645,913	23.2	4.7	12,459	698,129	15,249	850,506	15,856	19.4	3.9
11	14,266	660,179	21.2	4.2	11,518	709,647	14,263	864,769	14,533	19.1	3.6
18	14,559	674,736	18.4	3.6	11,842	721,489	14,549	879,318	14,801	18.5	3.7
25	12,206	686,944	18.0	3.5	8,996	730,485	11,318	890,636	11,331	18.4	3.7
Total and	686,944				730,485		880,636		174,265		
average			26.1	5.1						22.5	4.4

1/ Dates are for 1954; 1953 for corresponding weeks. 2/ 13 areas: Ala., Calif., Conn., Del-Mar-Va, Fla., Ga., Ind., Maine, Miss., N. Car., Oreg., Shen. Valley, and Texas. Excludes Ark. 3/ 14 areas: Same areas as above and including Arkansas. For weeks January 2 to July 10, includes only N. W. Arkansas. Weeks thereafter, for entire State. 4/ For weeks ending on Thursday.

Table 19.- Weekly placements of broiler chicks in 14 specialized areas, 1954, and annual totals, 1953 and 1954 1/

Week ending	Alabama	North West Ark. 2/	California	Connecticut	Del-Mar-Va.	Florida	Georgia	Indiana	Maine	Mississippi	N. Carolina	Oregon	Shen. Valley (Va. and W. Va.)	Texas
	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.
Jan. 2	997	1,194	1,144	463	2,836	275	3,168	759	654	907	1,099	94	970	1,709
9	991	1,074	1,230	511	2,884	273	3,095	802	516	908	1,122	84	909	1,588
16	997	1,108	1,164	401	2,603	264	2,859	819	568	885	1,059	97	879	1,577
23	908	956	1,136	359	2,656	254	2,743	829	524	839	1,155	88	950	1,366
30	900	1,096	1,205	487	2,860	232	3,053	826	566	804	1,123	113	944	1,338
Feb. 6	1,062	1,105	1,131	465	2,948	280	2,929	796	615	896	1,161	119	1,020	1,489
13	952	1,112	1,151	457	2,878	250	3,005	861	571	895	1,156	162	1,004	1,462
20	1,037	996	1,143	532	2,782	257	3,140	844	515	856	1,161	146	1,019	1,464
27	1,042	1,129	1,177	615	2,579	243	3,152	774	569	919	1,153	116	1,071	1,481
Mar. 6	1,047	1,032	1,165	579	2,642	259	3,220	824	581	862	1,191	152	1,089	1,532
13	1,123	1,018	1,126	533	2,752	287	3,374	782	609	933	1,223	136	1,099	1,554
20	1,123	1,109	1,121	503	2,804	269	3,266	775	581	1,022	1,191	170	1,163	1,691
27	1,142	1,133	1,238	484	2,939	359	3,409	919	613	1,000	1,241	142	1,069	1,712
Apr. 3	1,125	1,158	1,232	511	2,954	331	3,455	742	564	1,051	1,214	110	1,160	1,625
10	1,127	1,081	1,225	418	3,173	253	3,406	910	661	926	1,143	111	1,136	1,573
17	1,041	993	1,325	487	3,245	251	3,580	817	680	1,001	1,225	137	1,060	1,555
24	1,053	1,049	1,264	451	3,143	260	3,345	857	623	943	1,212	155	1,135	1,543
May 1	1,037	1,150	1,149	455	3,051	261	3,250	763	570	913	1,221	130	1,128	1,480
8	1,101	1,150	1,250	569	2,973	235	3,415	834	612	948	1,198	157	1,093	1,464
15	1,071	1,154	1,150	709	2,962	281	3,680	896	524	949	1,277	154	1,081	1,404
22	1,049	1,097	1,196	540	2,603	247	3,456	815	553	817	1,254	189	1,098	1,389
29	939	1,120	1,112	406	2,361	242	3,364	748	648	797	1,184	127	1,086	1,341
June 5	1,102	919	1,110	486	2,182	223	3,324	771	608	851	1,253	156	943	1,387
12	959	1,031	1,138	540	2,648	216	3,331	754	574	875	1,156	129	1,003	1,367
19	960	1,068	1,106	526	2,996	201	3,431	805	662	851	1,242	124	999	1,438
26	1,010	998	1,137	577	3,057	207	3,460	793	619	889	1,229	112	985	1,372
July 3	948	1,102	1,015	575	3,006	215	3,550	687	638	946	1,239	144	1,038	1,440
10	969	1,064	1,114	486	2,958	196	3,264	762	644	846	1,228	135	1,045	1,489
17	941	1,629	1,031	466	3,062	193	3,278	775	661	788	1,243	106	981	1,493
24	896	1,495	1,006	337	2,808	208	3,176	681	642	760	1,222	150	1,044	1,398
31	982	1,361	968	376	2,934	200	3,187	716	652	667	1,180	104	1,146	1,375
Aug. 7	872	1,298	923	327	2,793	230	3,015	693	620	701	1,196	95	1,139	1,311
14	886	1,134	993	489	2,579	215	2,854	708	683	730	1,223	91	1,175	1,208
21	871	1,344	1,020	517	2,588	204	3,035	751	656	695	1,233	99	1,139	1,190
28	1,000	1,520	938	401	2,600	225	3,034	676	616	734	1,214	70	1,020	1,254
Sept. 4	958	1,662	971	290	2,273	210	3,032	668	697	763	1,171	105	929	1,235
11	971	1,591	953	436	2,444	218	2,904	691	633	736	1,089	69	933	1,411
18	830	1,445	968	382	2,370	200	2,912	640	611	706	1,150	69	798	1,370
25	938	1,454	936	85	2,426	192	3,009	615	577	649	1,013	63	656	1,493
Oct. 2	1,000	1,435	920	369	2,196	160	3,036	598	630	660	1,024	81	753	1,392
9	970	1,286	935	344	1,967	198	2,714	489	472	688	858	86	477	1,386
16	1,079	1,301	919	386	1,838	149	2,627	420	590	694	814	68	409	1,394
23	1,015	1,372	877	383	1,760	160	2,701	507	501	718	878	74	456	1,396
30	1,011	1,186	878	343	1,889	175	2,612	600	609	655	798	80	598	1,411
Nov. 6	934	1,108	877	378	2,138	167	2,637	482	488	606	875	82	635	1,375
13	940	1,255	892	342	2,098	181	2,650	510	537	584	912	71	677	1,328
20	934	1,220	921	437	2,309	162	2,690	637	560	703	993	115	775	1,382
27	859	1,274	892	428	2,095	160	2,760	652	538	671	935	102	820	1,281
Dec. 4	938	1,302	910	495	2,273	174	2,790	599	637	644	917	92	710	1,280
11	820	1,241	812	439	2,050	144	2,745	542	572	601	903	89	648	1,153
18	797	1,212	802	474	2,234	153	2,707	513	572	622	915	114	670	1,269
25	677	1,022	702	319	1,541	130	2,322	395	555	525	561	75	527	667
Total, 1954	50,931	---	54,698	23,668	134,740	11,529	160,151	37,122	30,976	41,629	57,627	5,841	48,291	73,282
Total, 1953	32,384	---	53,267	23,026	149,545	11,106	133,258	39,355	29,101	37,872	53,578	5,256	48,689	70,507
% change from 1953	57	---	3	3	-10	4	20	-6	6	10	8	11	-1	4

1/ Weekly totals for the 13 areas (excluding N. W. Arkansas) are shown in table 18.

2/ For weeks January 2 to July 10 includes only N. W. Arkansas. Weeks thereafter, for entire State.

a month or two after mid-year. Reports available to early March did not clearly indicate the volume of production for the remainder of the season, particularly for heavy-type turkeys.

The 1954 crop of 61.0 million turkeys (42.9 million heavy-breed birds, 18.1 million light-breeds) was 9 percent above the year before. September-December prices for the crop averaged 28.2 cents per pound (live), 5.3 cents below 1953 and the lowest since 1942. Feed prices were about the same in 1954 as in 1953. Ordinarily, such a reduction in turkey prices would result in a reduction in turkey production the following year.

Farmers' January intentions were to grow the same number of heavy-breed turkeys that they raised in 1954. From last July 1 to February 1, however, 5 percent more heavy-breed turkeys than last year had been tested for inclusion in breeding flocks, and hatchings of heavy-breed poults from October 1, 1954 through January totaled 2.0 million this year compared to 1.7 million a year earlier. However, the eggs in incubators on February 1 were 11 percent fewer than last year. An equivalent percentage decrease in February hatchings would more than offset the extra output of heavy-breed poults from earlier hatchings.

In 11 States where turkey hatching operations are reported weekly, settings of heavy-breed eggs in the 4 weeks ending February 26 (and thus representative of February) were more than double the corresponding January activity, and poults hatched during 4 February weeks were also double the preceding 4 weeks. The increase in hatchings however, was smaller percentagewise than the January to February increase for the entire U. S. in 1954. These 11 States in 1954 accounted for about 65 percent of the year's production of heavy-breed poults. 1/

For light-breed turkeys, the situation is somewhat clearer. Farmers' January intentions were to buy 11 percent fewer poults. Testings of breeders, from July 1, 1954 to February 1, 1955, were 25 percent below the year earlier. However, hatchery output for November, December, and January was 5 percent above a year earlier. Eggs in incubators February 1 were 20 percent below last February 1. The 11-State report also indicates a smaller crop since it shows a decline of 12 percent from January to February in hatchings of light-weight breeds, whereas in 1954 in the U. S. the January-February change was a decrease of only 6 percent.

Storage holdings of turkeys are now smaller than last year. In 35 principal cities, March 5 holdings were 65 million pounds, 5 million below a year earlier. At the end of the week of December 11, when the 1954-55 holdings in the 35 cities were at their peak, stocks were 3 million pounds below a year earlier.

On a nationwide basis, storage holdings of 123 million pounds of turkey on February 1 were 2 percent below a year earlier, while the 1954 turkey crop was 9 percent larger (in number) than the 1953 crop. On December 1, when first-of-month storage holdings based on the 1954 turkey crop were at their peak, the total of 147 million pounds was 11 million pounds above the year before. The Institute of American Poultry Industries has made a survey of the composition of the February 1, 1955, storage holdings of turkey, with results as indicated in table 23.

1/ Penna., Mich., Wisc., Minn., Iowa, Va., N. Car., S. Car., Texas, Wash., and Calif.

Table 20.- Turkeys raised and related data; available data, 1930 to date

Year	Absolute numbers			Change from preceding year						
				Number			Percent			
	Turkeys raised	Turkey-feed price ratio 1/	Breeder hens on farms, Jan. 1	Turkeys raised 2/	Turkey-feed price ratio 1/	Breeder hens on farms, Jan. 1 2/	Turkeys raised 2/	Turkey-feed price ratio 1/	Farmers' intentions to raise turkeys	Breeder hens on farms, Jan. 1 2/
	Millions	Pounds	Millions	Millions	Pounds	Millions	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
1930	17	11.2		-1	-1.9		-6	-15		
1931	18	10.7		1	-0.5		5	-4		
1932	22	14.6		4	3.9		22	36		
1933	23	11.7		1	-2.9		4	-20		
1934	22	8.0		-2	-3.7		-7	-32		
1935	21	7.6		-1	-.4		-4	-5		
1936	28	12.2		7	4.6		34	61		
1937	26	6.6	3.5	-2	-5.6		-8	-46		
1938	27	10.7	3.2	1	4.1	-0.3	4	62	6	-7
1939	34	12.5	3.9	7	1.8	.7	25	17	27	21
1940	34	9.4	4.6	3/	-3.1	.7	1	-25	5	18
1941	33	9.4	3.8	-1	0	-.8	-4	0	-3	-16
1942	33	10.1	4.0	3/	.7	.1	3/	7	8	3
1943	32	12.4	3.9	-1	2.3	-.1	-2	23	12	-2
1944	35	11.3	4.2	3	-1.1	.3	10	-9	2	8
1945	43	11.8	4.5	8	.5	.3	22	4	8	7
1946	40	11.1	4.8	-3	-.7	.3	-6	-6	-5	7
1947	34	10.2	3.8	-6	-.9	-1.1	-15	-8	-16	-22
1948	32	7.7	2.5	-2	-2.5	-1.2	-7	-25	-18	-33
1949	41	13.1	3.1	10	5.4	.6	31	70	25	24
1950	44	10.2	3.3	3	-2.9	.1	6	-22	1	4
1951	52	9.0	3.3	9	-1.2	4/	20	-12	1	1
1952	61	9.2	3.8	8	.2	.5	16	2	11	15
1953	56	8.2	3.4	-5	-1.0	-.5	-8	-11	-8	-12
1954 5/	61	9.1	3.4	5	.9	4/	9	11	7	2
1955 5/		7.5	3.4		-1.6	4/		-18	-4	3/

1/ Weighted average of monthly ratios as follows: 1930-44, preceding October, 1; preceding November, 4; preceding December, 4; January, 1. 1945 to date, preceding October, 2; preceding November, 4; preceding December, 3: January, 1. 2/ Computed from unrounded data. 3/ Change smaller than 0.5. 4/ Less than 0.05. 5/ Preliminary.

Table 21.- Turkeys: Official testings of birds for inclusion in breeder flocks, and poult production in commercial hatcheries, by breed types, and subsequent sales from farms, monthly January 1953 to date

Year and month	Heavy breeds					Light breeds					Light and heavy breeds combined					
	Birds officially tested		Poults hatched			Birds officially tested		Poults hatched			Birds officially tested		Poults hatched			
	During the month	Cumulative for years beginning July 1	During the month	Cumulative for years beginning Sept. 1	Turkeys raised in calendar year*	During the month	Cumulative for years beginning July 1	During the month	Cumulative for years beginning Sept. 1	Turkeys raised in calendar year*	During the month	Cumulative for years beginning July 1	During the month	Cumulative for years beginning Sept. 1	Turkeys raised in calendar year*	Monthly distribution of sales from farms: percentage of total sales from each year's crop
	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Mil.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Mil.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Mil.	
1953																
Jan.	297	2,104	858			86	374	968			383	2,478	1,826			
Feb.	109	2,214	2,819			58	432	1,201			167	2,645	4,020			
Mar.	31	2,245	8,776			12	444	1,667			43	2,689	10,443			
Apr.	6	2,250	12,762			17	461	2,270			23	2,711	15,032			
May	[1]	2,250	12,669			6	467	2,964			6	2,717	15,633			
June	1	2,251	6,321			25	492	2,649			26	2,743	8,970			
July	13	13	1,150		40.9	38	38	1,804		15.6	51	51	2,954		56.5	[2]9.0
Aug.	22	35	123			57	95	1,103			79	130	1,226			6.6
Sept.	100	135	11	11		95	191	442	442		195	326	453	453		13.6
Oct.	353	488	25	36		112	302	408	850		464	790	433	886		15.6
Nov.	591	1,079	65	101		90	393	671	1,521		682	1,472	736	1,622		30.2
Dec.	638	1,717	345	446		72	465	1,306	2,827		710	2,182	1,651	3,273		20.2
1954																
Jan.	326	2,043	1,219	1,665		71	536	1,736	4,563		398	2,579	2,955	6,228		[3]4.8
Feb.	144	2,187	3,366	5,031		82	618	1,636	6,199		226	2,805	5,002	11,230		
Mar.	35	2,223	9,273	14,304		44	662	1,842	8,041		80	2,885	11,115	22,345		
Apr.	4	2,227	13,546	27,850		11	673	2,264	10,305		15	2,900	15,810	38,155		
May	4	2,231	12,988	40,838		19	692	3,179	13,484		23	2,923	16,167	54,322		
June	8	2,239	7,511	48,349		67	759	2,942	16,426		75	2,998	10,453	64,755		
July	30	30	1,397	49,746	42.9	79	79	2,371	18,797	18.1	109	109	3,768	68,543	61.0	[2]9.9
Aug.	48	78	88	49,834		68	147	1,288	20,085		116	225	1,376	69,919		6.8
Sept.	124	202	25	25		68	214	684	684		191	417	709	709		11.1
Oct.	383	585	61	86		44	258	653	1,337		426	843	714	1,423		17.3
Nov.	570	1,155	178	264		24	282	1,012	2,349		594	1,437	1,190	2,613		30.2
Dec.	633	1,787	528	792		73	355	1,579	3,928		706	2,143	2,107	4,720		19.6
1955																
Jan.	364	2,151	1,196	1,988		49	404	1,323	5,251		412	2,555	2,519	7,239		[3]5.1

[1] Less than 0.5 thousand.
[2] "Before August 1."
[3] "January or later."
* These numbers are to be revised in late March.

Table 22.- Turkey hatchery operations in 11 States with comparisons

Period (1955 unless otherwise stated)	Unit	Heavy breeds		Light breeds	
		Eggs set	Poults hatched	Eggs set	Poults hatched
		(a) 11 States			
4 weeks in January	Thous.	3,425	923	1,598	1,012
Weeks ending:					
February 5	Thous.	1,585	393	409	225
12	Thous.	1,875	409	326	215
19	Thous.	2,232	559	334	211
26	Thous.	2,293	674	320	239
4 weeks in February	Thous.	7,985	2,035	1,389	890
4 weeks in Feb., as a percent of 4 weeks in Jan.	Pct.	233	220	87	88
		(b) United States, and comparisons with United States			
Month of Feb., 1954 as a percent of Jan. 1954, 1/ U. S.	Pct.		306		104
Month of Jan., 11 States, as a percent of U. S.	Pct.		92		75

1/ After adjustment for length of month: February as a percent of Jan. ÷ 31/28.

Table 23.- Turkeys: Composition of storage stocks, available data, September 1952 to date

Classification	Percentage of total reported holdings, by weight					
	September 30			January 31		
	1952	1953	1954	1953	1954	1955
	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
Eviscerated tom turkeys	26	36	41	55	73	72
Eviscerated hen turkeys	37	45	46	10	8	18
Eviscerated broiler-fryer type turkeys	8	11	7	1	3	4
N. Y. dressed tom turkeys	12	5	5	26	15	4
N. Y. dressed hen turkeys	17	3	1	8	1	2
	Mil.lb.	Mil.lb.	Mil.lb.	Mil.lb.	Mil.lb.	Mil.lb.
Size of sample on which percentages are based	53	46	50	89	87	80
Total U. S. cold-storage holdings, same date	71	69	78	143	125	123

Institute of American Poultry Industries.

MARKETING MARGINS FOR POULTRY AND EGGS [1]

Farm and retail prices of eggs, chickens, and turkeys fell sharply during 1954, primarily because of record output of these commodities. In contrast, marketing margins remained comparatively stable or widened slightly. The stability in margins largely reflects rigidities in marketing costs. For example, in 1954 wage rates, transportation rates, and costs of containers and supplies did not change appreciably.

With marketing margins fairly stable in cents per unit and both retail and farm prices lower, margins as a percentage of retail prices widened considerably in 1954. In other words, the farmer's share of the dollar spent by the consumer for poultry and eggs fell sharply. These conclusions are based on analyses of data obtained by the Department from regular sources and from special studies conducted during the past year.

Retail and farm prices of eggs in 1954 were well below 1953 in all months except January and February. Available data indicate that marketing margins during the first three quarters of 1954 were about the same in cents per dozen as a year earlier but that the margin in the fourth quarter was about 2 cents per dozen wider. Because of deficiencies in retail price data, it is not certain that margins in the fourth quarter actually increased. Retail prices of eggs for the United States are available only for Large Grade A eggs. From this price, United States average prices for all eggs sold at retail are estimated on the basis of past price relationships among sizes and grades of eggs. From price reports available for only a few cities, it appears that differentials among prices of large and smaller sized eggs were much wider in the fall of 1954 than in earlier years. Therefore, the actual retail price of eggs in the United States in the fourth quarter may have been slightly lower than the estimated price.

Retail prices and farm values of fryers or broilers in 1954 were well below 1953 but marketing margins in cents per pound were about the same. Farm prices of commercial broilers in major producing areas declined substantially in 1953 and 1954. While retail prices fluctuated considerably, the general trend was downward. Farm-to-retail price spreads in general remained fairly steady in cents per pound, but as percentages of the retail price they widened substantially.

Farm prices of turkeys in major producing areas in early November 1954 were down as much as 9 cents per pound from prices in November 1953. In general, prices of heavier birds fell more than prices of light-breed turkeys. In the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia and West Virginia, farm prices of heavy-breed turkeys were down 7 to 8 cents from November 1953, while prices of light-breed turkeys were down about 6 cents. The U. S. average price received by farmers for turkeys in October-December 1954 averaged 28.4 cents per pound (live), as compared with 33.9 cents the year before.

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[1] Adapted from an article prepared by Robert M. Conlogue and Norris T. Pritchard, AMS, and originally published in The Marketing and Transportation Situation, January 1955.

Gross farm-to-retail margins on all turkeys, at about 9 to 14 cents per pound, ready-to-cook basis, were about the same or slightly lower in November 1954 than in November 1953. But, as a percentage of the lower retail prices, gross margins were larger in 1954. Margins were generally smallest on the heaviest birds. Many retailers, particularly chain stores, appeared to be taking exceedingly low margins on turkeys sold in the weeks immediately preceding Thanksgiving and Christmas. This is not unusual during those weeks.

Table 24.- Turkeys: Growth rates and feed consumption, hens and toms

Age	Hens 1/				Toms 1/			
	Average weight	Gain in weight for month	Total feed required to date	Feed required per pound gain to date	Average weight	Gain in weight for month	Total feed required to date	Feed required per pound gain to date
Months	Lb.	Lb.	Lb.	Lb.	Lb.	Lb.	Lb.	Lb.
1	1.3	1.18	1.9	1.6	1.5	1.38	2.2	1.6
2	4.0	2.7	8.2	2.1	4.6	3.1	9.4	2.1
3	7.1	3.1	19.0	2.7	9.3	4.7	23.0	2.5
4	10.1	3.0	32.0	3.3	14.0	4.7	43.0	3.1
5	12.8	2.7	47.0	3.7	18.7	4.7	63.0	3.4
6	15.0	2.2	67.0	4.5	23.4	4.7	82.0	3.5

1/ Broad-Breasted Bronze and Empire White.

M. L. Scott, Cornell University, in Turkey World, January 1955.

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